

Interim Management Policy

BLM National Monuments

BLM National Conservation Areas

Adhere to direction in the legislation or the President's Proclamation

- Federal lands and interests in lands within the national conservation area or monument are withdrawn from all forms of entry, location, selection, sale, leasing, or other disposition under the public land laws, including among others the mineral leasing and mining laws unless otherwise specified in legislation or the Proclamation.
- Valid existing rights will be recognized.
- The State's responsibilities and authorities regarding wildlife management, including fishing and hunting, within the national conservation area or the monument are unaffected by legislation or the Proclamation.
- Grazing activities shall continue to be governed by applicable laws and regulations other than specified in legislation or the Proclamation.
- Existing withdrawals, reservations, or appropriations are not revoked, but the national conservation area or monument is the dominant reservation.

Maintain existing management policies, designations, and allocations except where changes are necessary to comply with the legislation or Proclamation and protect the objects of scientific and historic interest within the national conservation area or monument.

Provide the public with prompt and accessible information on questions regarding the use of federal lands within the national conservation area or monument.

Coordinate with the local, State, Tribal, and other governmental entities (under existing agreements and any new arrangements deemed necessary) to disseminate and exchange information and cooperate in management actions, consistent with applicable legal authorities and other directives.

Assure the applications, proposals, and future use requests pending when the legislation or Proclamation was issued are subject to the terms of the legislation or Proclamation, including its recognition of valid existing rights, and other management directives and decisions relate to the national conservation area or monument.

Consider land or easement acquisitions and land exchanges that will enhance the values of the national conservation area or monument.

All existing planning documents related to the monument lands should be reviewed for consistency with the legislation or Proclamation. Consistent with NEPA and FLPMA, the plans should be modified or a new plan created for the monument that addresses all resource issues in the legislation or Proclamation. A separate planning document for the national conservation area or monument is recommended, as opposed to combining the national conservation area or monument with an adjacent administrative resource area.

Discussion of Specific Activities

In general, actions that are not precluded by the Proclamation or legislation and which do not conflict with the established purposes of the monument or national conservation area may continue. Allowed activities can be restricted only where (1) the BLM, through processes required by existing law, identifies places where such uses ought to be restricted or prohibited as necessary to protect the federal lands and resources, including the objects protected by the monument or national conservation designation; or (2) where the BLM finds a clear threat from such a use to the federal lands and resources, including the objects protected by the national conservation area or monument designation and the circumstances call for swift protective action.

Livestock Grazing: Where applicable and consistent with the designation, livestock grazing within the national conservation area or monument is permitted, pursuant to the terms of permits and leases. Appropriate grazing management practices (as in all properly managed grazing pastures) should be followed to protect rangeland resources. Implementation of Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Improvement should continue. Actions should be taken to assist permits in assuring compliance with existing requirements. Enforcement actions against trespassers or other violators continue to be authorized under policy.

Animal Damage Control: Coordinate closely with State Game and Fish Department and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on animal damage control issues.

Camping: Dispersed recreational camping may continue consistent with current policies and practices and the Proclamation. Developed BLM camping facilities should be maintained and rehabilitated as appropriate, consistent with monument purposes.

Facilities: Maintenance of existing facilities should be permitted, subject to compliance with current policies and practices, provided monument resources are protected. Applications for new facilities may be considered, if they will protect or enhance monument resources.

Hunting and Fishing: Coordinate with the State to ensure public safety, specifically if there are areas of increased visitor use.

Mineral Activities (including Hard rock, Oil, Gas, and Coal): Unless otherwise specified in legislation or proclamation all valid existing rights will be recognized in accordance with policy.

Noxious Weeds/Exotic Species: Existing noxious weed control activities should continue. Exotic species should not be introduced, unless doing so is essential to control noxious weeds or other undesirable species.

Off-Road Vehicles: No areas in the national conservation area or monument should be authorized for cross-country, off-road vehicular use, except for authorized administrative and emergency purposes. For routes, including washes, where motorized and mechanical vehicular use has been authorized by past planning decisions, management discretion should be exercised where necessary, through emergency closures or other actions, to protect the national conservation area or monument resources. Wheeled game carriers are exempt.

Paleontological Resources and Rock Collection: The collection of any objects, including vegetation, paleontological resources, or rock specimens, should not be permitted, except where intended for legitimate scientific uses for which documentation is provided to the satisfaction of the responsible management official. Where limited wood gathering for uses including fire wood and fence maintenance occurred prior to designation, this activity could be permitted. In such cases the manager must assure that national conservation area or monument resources are not affected.

Rights-of-Way: No new rights-of-way or ancillary public facilities should be processed, except for rights-of-way pursuant to existing policies and practices and necessary for access and/or maintenance needs to private or state in holdings, public facilities or administrative sites. In addition, rights-of-way may be permitted within the boundary of existing rights-of-way or designated rights-of-way corridors established by previous land use planning, and where site specific NEPA analysis determines that impact to the objects or values for which the national conservation area or monument was designated would be negligible.

Roads: Road improvements should be minimal and designed solely to correct those conditions that are unsafe or hazardous. Activities that maintain, as opposed to enhance, existing roads may be permissible.

Scientific, Archeological, and Historical Investigations: Scientific, archeological, and historical investigations that increase our understanding of the national conservation area's or monument's resources are important and scientific use for surveys and reconnaissance may be allowed but surface disturbance should be avoided.

Signs and Interpretation: Appropriate signs at the national conservation area's or monument's boundaries should be provided. Other relevant information should be posted as needed. Actions should be initiated to interpret the resources and values and provide environmental education to visitors on important topics (i.e., visitor safety and resource protection).

Surface Disturbance and Reclamation Activities under Current Permits: Surface disturbance and reclamation activities under current permits should proceed consistent with those permits. Permit extensions will be considered subject to consistency with applicable policies, laws and proclamation.

Vegetation Manipulation: Vegetation manipulation should proceed only when consistent with conservation and protection of the national conservation area or monument's resources. Chaining and other vegetation manipulation methods that cause substantial surface disturbance shall not be permitted.

Wilderness Study Areas: Where applicable, maintain the non-impairment standard for wilderness study areas, per FLPMA, to prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of resources.